

three distinct questions. One (A) was the old and oft-discussed submission of the Armenian Church to the see of Peter (that included the abandonment of certain wrong liturgical practices): another (B) the protection of the Latin Religious Orders and their Armenian flocks against the machinations of other parties; and (C) co-operation by Persia against the Turks. As to the first, even before Archbishop Peter Paul's arrival, on 9.3.1699¹ a Dominican friar at Julfa was writing:

“ . . . I have heard that Mgr d'Ancyra has a commission to protect Nahapiet, the patriarch of the Armenians. . . . Some people are astonished to see Rome taking it into its head to support a schismatic without there having been any well-founded hope of his being willing to come to a union with the Catholic Church. . . . ”

Since the removal of his rival, Stephen, the Katholikos Nahapiet had, as already shown, been in touch with Rome so that the Sac. Congregation had been encouraged to hope for a good result. Bishop Elias observed, however,² in his letter of June 1699 to the Cardinals:

“as to the change of mind and shuffling of the Armenian patriarch Nahapiet, who has never deigned to reply to the letters I repeatedly wrote him in accordance with the orders of the Sac. Cong., Monseigneur (the Archbishop of Ancyra) experienced the same: and, far from his (Nahapiet) doing something in favour of union, we find that he is himself the author of the persecution stirred up a short while ago in Tiflis, Ganjeh and Hamadan, threatening the Fathers in Tiflis too if they continue to allow Armenians to go to their church and receive the Sacraments. And, so, let their Eminences see that they do not allow themselves to be tricked by his fine promises and may God not allow the presents, which are said to have been sent to him on the part of His Holiness, to reach him. . . . ”

Among the *raqams* or Imperial decrees issued at the request of the Archbishop of Ancyra, such as a permission for all missionaries to re-erect their houses, convents, to exercise their functions, bury the dead, punishment of the culprits at Tabriz of those molesting the Armenians—*vide* the “Statement of what the king of Persia has been pleased to grant Mgr d'Ancyra, ambassador to this Crown on behalf of His Holiness, his Majesty the Emperor, and other European princes”³—was one

“which absolutely commanded all the Armenian race in the kingdom of Persia not to dare in future, any single man of them, to curse S. Leo, with a statement of the fines which would be imposed on those contravening it; and, moreover, that in future none of their priests be raised to the position of bishop or patriarch, unless in obedience to the holy, apostolic See and to our Holy Father—this ‘convention’ to be executed some day ahead in the residence of my lord of Ancyra by all the heads and bishops of Julfa, by order of the king. . . . ”!!

(An astounding document—of which the original in Persian would be of unique historical interest, did it exist; but no trace of it, nor of any copy was to be observed with the paper inspected in the archives of Propaganda Fide for this work, if indeed the Archbishop sent it to Rome! A Shiah Muslim monarch imposing doctrinal observances and canonical jurisdiction on a Christian body was a step a good way farther than making and deposing a Katholikos arbitrarily! But in this reign any cheque placed before the Court would be signed without scruple: there would be no intention of honouring it.)

The Archbishop of Ancyra himself observed in his letter from Bandar 'Abbas to Rome, 1.4.1700,⁴ sceptically:

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 232, Fr. John Bartholomew.

³ *Vide* the list, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 341.

² 14.6.1699, *S.N.R.*, p. 264.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 541, p. 17.